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 FALL SEMESTER

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# VALLEY STAR

THE INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE

VOLUME 63, ISSUE NO. 7

DECEMBER 8, 2004

It's YOUR Newspaper

## Campus Cafeteria to Close Doors in '05

■ Campus eatery is scheduled for demolition and is to be replaced by new campus library.

BY MARILYN MINTON  
 STAFF WRITER

Operating at a loss since its inception in the 1950s, Valley College's cafeteria lost more than \$180,000 last year. Despite rumors to the contrary, the cafeteria will continue to function for at least another eight to 12 months.

Tom Jacobsmeyer, vice president of administrative services stated, "we are not out to make a profit, but we would at least like to break even."

Always in the red, the cafeteria food service supplier was changed three years ago to Orion Foods, with the expectation that they would offer better quality and service.

"Orion, unfortunately, did not provide the promised improvements," said Jacobsmeyer. "We are now in discussion and in the process of re-evaluating all food service plans."

Types of food served at the cafeteria are hamburgers, hero sandwiches, pizza, salads and assorted snacks and drinks.

"I've tried all the food, it's terrible," said business major, Lucy Megerian. "Only when I am really hungry, and have to eat something, I will go there and buy chips and a soda."

"People on campus have no choice when they are far from home, but to eat what's there. I hope they are going to do some-

thing about bringing in better food."

Within the next four to six months, Valley will build two new kiosks in order to ensure the continuity of food service for the faculty and students, during the construction phases. The kiosks will be centrally located at the north and south ends of the campus, and will be about five times larger than the existing one.

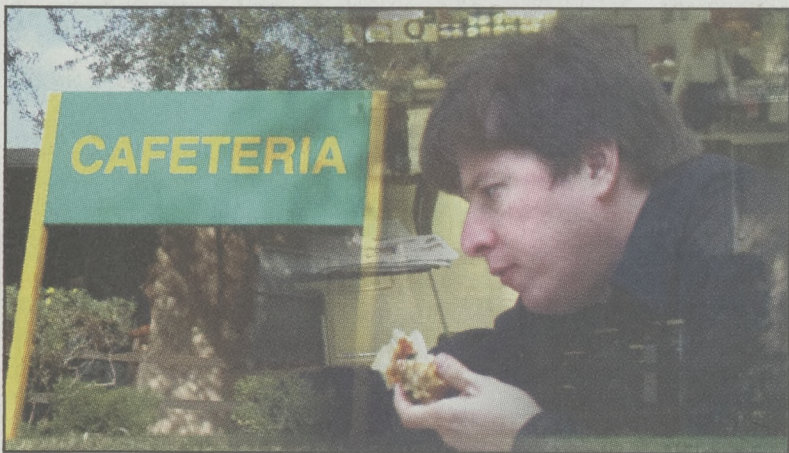
For approximately 18 to 24 months, there will be no formal cafeteria on campus.

The new cafeteria will be housed in the student services building that is scheduled to be completed in 2007.

One additional concern expressed by Jacobsmeyer was the relocation and placement of those cafeteria employees, who are actually employees of the college.

Demolition of the cafeteria building in its present location will be under way within the next year, and the new library complex is to be erected in its place. The library is part of the major construction and renovation plans for Valley, scheduled to start in 2005 as result of the passage of Propositions A, AA and 47.

"I won't eat [at the cafeteria], the food is disgusting, unhealthy and unappetizing," said business major, Nathan Muhlstein. "Hopefully, when they build the new facilities the food will be better, and then more students will be eating there."



GREG BURMANN/ VALLEY STAR PHOTO ILLUSTRATION  
**LOW TURNOUT** - Richard Avila is one of few students who has his lunch at Valley College's cafeteria.

## Weapons of Math Instruction

■ Students get by with a little help from their tutors.

BY SUSAN MALTBY  
 OPINION EDITOR

Almost every student at Valley College will struggle to fulfill a math requirement before he or she can transfer or graduate.

Unfortunately, math has one of the lowest success rates of all disciplines on campus, according to the latest statistics from Valley's Office of Research and Planning.

"The vast majority of students needs at least [math] 115," said Steve Castillo, math department chair. "A good number of those students utilize the math lab tutorial program."

Castillo sees several thousand students pass through the

tutoring lab each year to take advantage of resources designed to help floundering students pass the class.

"The math lab offers free peer tutoring and computers equipped with peer tutoring software," said Castillo. "There are textbooks and videos students can borrow. Students seem to enjoy working with the tutors and can be helped quite a bit."

Students can take advantage of the many services and tutoring in the math science building, room 106, Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. and on Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Zheng Zhang, 29, is an electrical engineering major who volunteers his time to help stu-

dents learn.

"A lot of people struggle to pass math, but my job is to guide them not only to pass but to enjoy math," said Zhang. "Some students used to struggle to pass, however, with my help they got A's."

Aspiring registered nurses must also earn a grade of C or better in math in order to graduate.

Wendy J.G. DuFour, assistant professor of nursing, also fulfills the new role of tutoring program facilitator, dedicated to improving student success rates. The department started a nursing math tutoring program last year with an L.A. County Department of Health Services grant

see *Math* page 5

## SANTA COMES TO TOWN



GREG BURMANN/ VALLEY STAR  
**WITH VISIONS OF SUGAR PLUMS** - Veronica Alemu eagerly whispered her Christmas wish list to Santa Claus when he visited the Child Development Center on Dec. 7.

## Pell Grants Cut Student Aid

■ Average scholarship cut \$300; 1 million students cut from program.

BY LAGINA PHILLIPS  
 EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

More than one million students will receive less financial aid and almost 100,000 students will lose funding completely if President Bush signs into law a bill the House and Senate approved Nov. 20.

While a similar bill was blocked by congress last year, as many as 1.2 million low-income students could have their grants cut, according to the American Council on Education, which represents colleges. While the average Pell Grant would be reduced by \$300, middle-class students would be most affected, according to officials. Middle class, by definition, is an annual income of \$30,000 to \$40,000.

"They are throwing students out of the opportunity to seek a college education," said Sen. Jon S. Corzine, the New Jersey Democrat who wrote the amendment to stop the changes last year, and introduced a

similar provision this year that did not survive the conference committee. "It is now clear to me that this was a backdoor attempt to cut funding from the Pell grant program."

The bill would change the formula the U.S. Department of Education uses to determine eligibility, but keeping the old formula in place for another year would add an extra \$300 million in grants for college students to a program that is already running at a shortfall, the Office of Management and

Budget said.

Controversy surrounded the Pell Grant program earlier this year when Bush's 2005 budget was released freezing the maximum grant at \$4050 for the third consecutive year, eliminating approximately 84,000 students nationwide from the program.

Almost two million community college students receive Pell Grants each year and according to Financial Aid Director Barbara Ralston, 15 to 20 percent of Valley College students receive Pell grants.

## Fellows Quits out of Loyalty

■ Valley College football program looks ahead.

BY ZABIE MANSOORY  
 STAFF WRITER

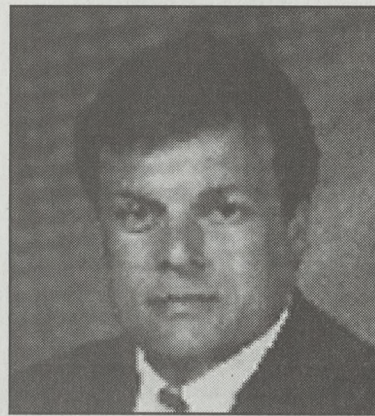
Valley College Head Football Coach Ron Ponciano, whose firing still has not been officially announced, may be moving on to coach the defense at Citrus College.

Contrary to an account previously published in The Valley Star, first-year assistant Don Fellows was not fired, although he has decided to leave the team.

"Fellows quit because of his loyalty to Ron Ponciano," said Dale Beck, sports information director for Valley, confirming that the assistant coach resigned on Dec. 15.

There has been no official announcement because of the legal process necessitated by such a personnel move. It is still not clear if Ponciano will return to Valley next semester to teach physical education classes.

see *Coach* page 5



FILE PHOTO

## 'Disconnected' From the World

■ Already a published writer, a 20-year-old Valley College students has big plans.

BY LAGINA PHILLIPS  
 EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

"This was your idea, so don't blame me if you get bored reading this," reads the opening line of Valley College student Emily Davidson's book, "Disconnected," released this September.

The 20-year-old Armenia native's book is written from the perspective of a 15-year-old boy writing a journal for his therapist. A boy who, "Is so busy trying to tell you what to see that he distracts himself from seeing it," Davidson said of the main character, Devon.

"[Devon is] very much the anti-hero, someone who's lazy with everything in life."

The philosophy / religion major said she never intended to write a book, she just wanted to create a character to vent her anger and frustration through.

"The day I finished it, I read it and decided to send it to publishers," she said. Davidson sent the book to eight publishing companies and received offers from each.

"They all wanted me to cut

stuff out - censor it - except one," she said of American Publisher, the company whose offer she later accepted.

The 134-page book chronicles one boy's life and the people he comes across.

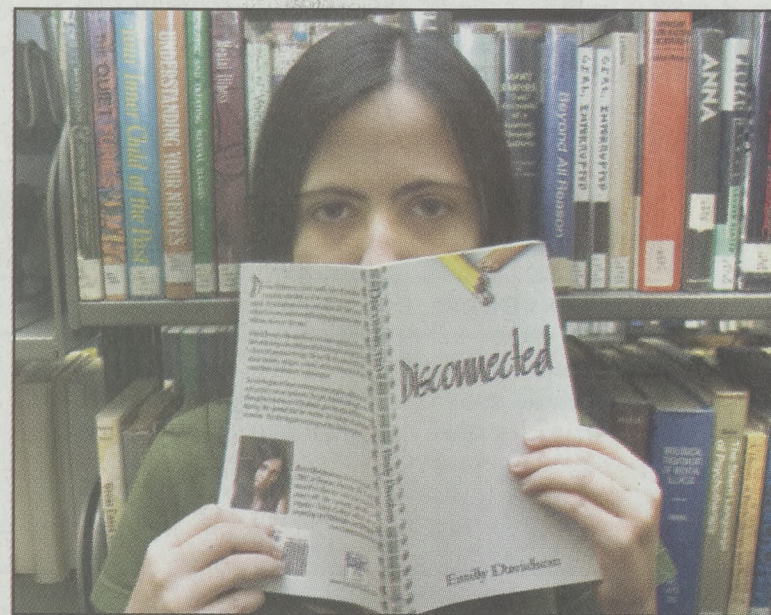
Shortly after deciding to drop out of school, Devon develops an unhealthy infatuation for a girl who lives in the house beside his.

Without knowing the girl's real name, Devon calls her April.

"It says a lot about Devon, he calls her April even after finding out her name is Stephanie," said Davidson.

Devon's interest in April turns to obsession when he begins to stalk her and her best

see *Disconnected* page 7



GREG BURMANN/ VALLEY STAR  
**AUTHOR BEHIND THE BOOK** - Valley student, Emily Davidson authored her first book, "Disconnected."



CAMPUS EYE

**ACADEMIC BROWN BAG LUNCH:**  
Thursday, Dec. 9, 1 p.m. at CCR.

**STARS STEERING COMMITTEE:**  
Thursday, Dec. 9, 2 p.m. at PSCR.

**VALLEY'S HOLIDAY PARTY:**  
Thursday, Dec. 16, 12 p.m.-2 p.m. at Monarch Hall.  
RSVP the bookstore or Academic Affairs by Dec. 10.

**STARS YEAR-END AWARDS CELEBRATION:**  
Friday, Dec. 17, 12 p.m.-2 p.m.  
Location TBA.

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**CAREER PLANNING WORKSHOP:**  
Wednesday, Dec. 8, 1 p.m. and  
Thursday, Dec. 9, 5:30 p.m. at  
Career Transfer Center.

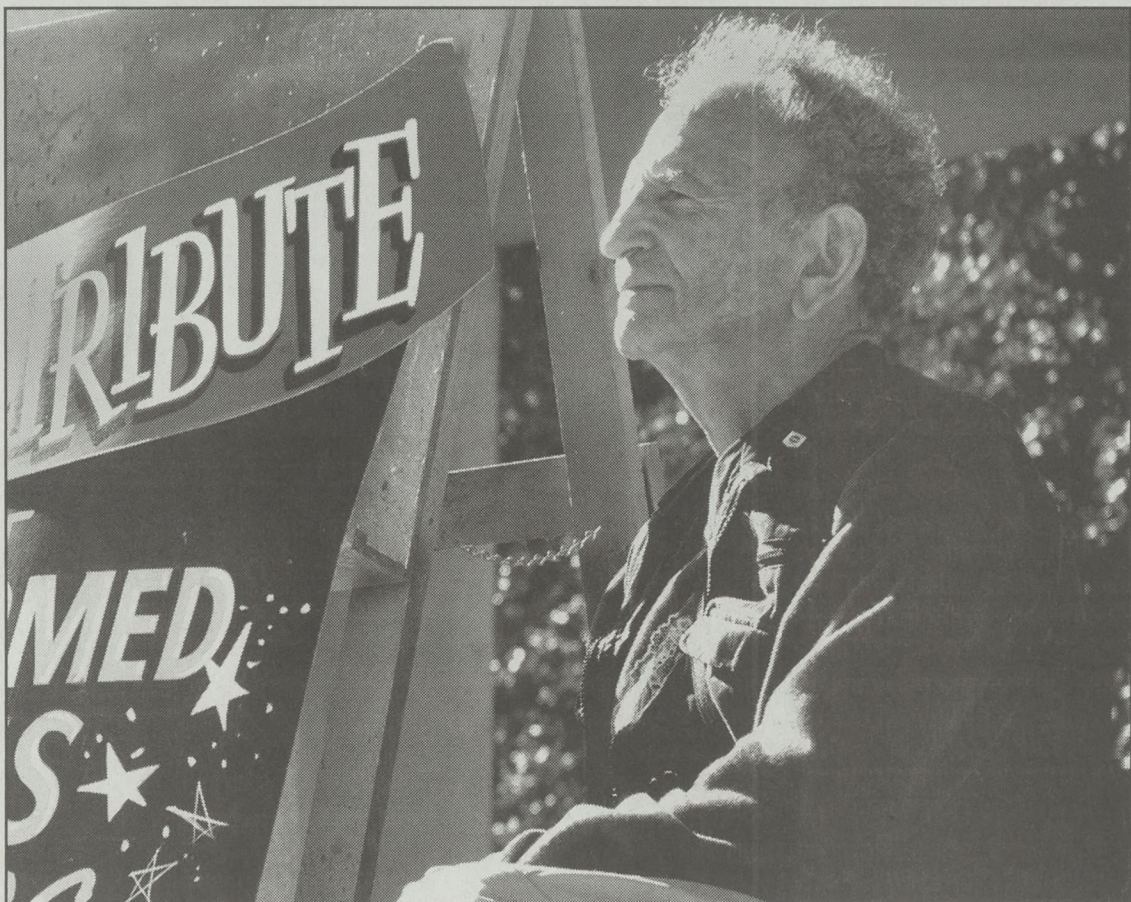
**CAREER/ TRANSFER CENTER NOVEMBER REPRESENTATIVE VISITS:**

**CSUN:**  
Monday Dec. 13, 5 p.m.-7 p.m. at Career Transfer Center.

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR FALL '05 IS FEB. 1.**

**CSUN AND CSLA ARE STILL ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR FALL '05.**

**FAFSA FILING PERIOD IS JAN. 1- MARCH 2.**



DANIEL VILLASENOR / VALLEY STAR

**TRIBUTE TO THE VETERANS** - Thirty minutes before a student-tribute to the wounded and dead soldiers in Iraq was to begin, Valley College's Sheriff's department informed the organizer of the event that the ceremony could not precede. Ned Moore, the organizer, claims he received clearance from the Sheriff's department for the Dec. 1 event at Monarch Square, but Sheriff's informed Moore that he had not filed the correct paper work and an officer stood watch to ensure no tribute took place.

Fear and Loathing of Local Malls

■ Shopping during the holidays can bring out the scrooge in everybody.

BY KATHARINE ANDERSON  
MANAGING EDITOR

'Tis the season to go shopping. It is also the season to be stuck in holiday traffic, circle mall parking lots in the endless search for an open space and get trampled in the rush to buy this year's hottest gifts.

Luckily for weary students there is a different way.

The Internet has given shoppers a whole new world of solutions and can save students'

hard-earned cash at the same time.

Online merchants offer most items that popular retail stores do - sometimes more. Web-only sales can be easy on the pocketbook and at the same time make the gift-giver shine.

Take for instance this year's hottest toy for toddlers - Dora's Talking Dollhouse. Most retail stores are offering this item for \$49.99 or more. This toy is offered online for as little as \$44.32. Toysrus.com is offering

it for \$44.99 and if you purchase \$49 in eligible items, shipping is free.

For those who want to give the latest fashions, oldnavy.com is featuring \$5 standard shipping on all orders. And, buyers can find the right color and size online without having to pick through everyone else's rejects.

For the unique gift at a bargain price, ebay.com can be the place to shop. Ebay sellers offer everything from Christmas gifts

see Mall page 5

COMING UP

With 2004 marking Valley College's 55th anniversary, the release of "L.A. Valley College: First 55 years" chronicles Valley's history through photographs taken by Valley students. With such notable political figures as Martin Luther King Jr. and Bill Clinton visiting campus, "55 years" is a retrospect of Valley's evolving campus and rich history.

This book is expected to be available to consumers by the first of the year. For more information contact the Patrons Association at (818) 947-2336.

CAMPUS CRIME  
Vandal Assaults Parking Meter with Paper Clips

BY ADRIANA OLIVAREZ  
STAFF WRITER

Vandalism:

Valley College police are on the lookout for the vandal who has been using paper clips to tamper with campus parking meters. The latest incident, Dec. 1, left the thumb-turn on the meter torn and stripped. Police say they think the vandal was trying to obtain free time on the meters by using paper clips.

A vandal randomly sabotaged the trash compactor wall located off the Hatteras Street - Coldwater Canyon entrance, Dec. 2. According to campus police, the would-be "artiste"

ASU Wraps Up  
'04, Looks to '05

■ ASU looks back with pride and forward with hope.

BY MAGGIE OWNBEY  
STAFF WRITER

With the fall semester ending, the Valley College Associated Student Union is focusing on encouraging students to unite.

"Students are not apathetic," said ASU President Levon Bagramian. "They see that people are genuinely concerned and they will react in a positive way."

Many highlights from the past semester focused on increasing student awareness including Rigoberta Menchu's visit to Valley; the assembly with California State Senator Jack Scott, and the 'political fair to remember,' that included political party representatives who spoke to students before the presidential election.

ASU members are planning next semester's events to keep students politically involved.. Efforts are being made to initiate symposiums with high profile guest speakers, reminiscent of Valley's Athenaeum days. Also a mayoral debate is scheduled to take place prior to the March 3 primary election.

"Politics can, and should be used as a positive tool," said Bagramian.

The ASU also plans to attend the annual 'March in March,' rally in Sacramento.. In April, the ASU will show their force through lobbying by going to Washington D.C. for a student conference.

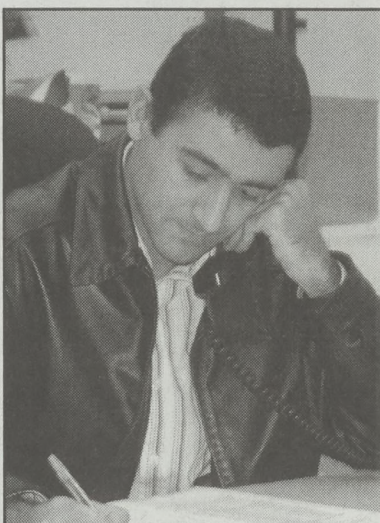
"Get involved, do something that will be beneficial," said Jessie Salas, vice president of ASU. "Take part and don't be oblivious to the student government that is working for you."

With this year drawing to a close, the ASU looks to the spring with events that will include the fine arts festival, a sweetheart's valentine dance, the dean's reception and commencement.

"I got a clear idea of what we need to do to move forward this year," said Salas. "We worked hard at building up our people power because power is in numbers."

Bagramian says he looks forward to next semester.

"I'm proud of our students; ASU [needs] to respond in kind and do more for them next semester."



DANIEL VILLASENOR / VALLEY STAR

**BUSY AT WORK** - ASU president, Levon Bagramian, and his staff look back at their work during the semester and look forward to continue their duties in the spring.

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# OPINION

3

ALL THE NEWS THAT GIVES US FITS

## Students Re-Victimized

■ Congress approves bill to cut college grant money.

BY KATHARINE ANDERSON  
MANAGING EDITOR

Some students are feeling the crunch of the predominantly republican government yet again. The House and Senate approved a new spending bill Nov. 20 which, if signed into law by President Bush, would affect more than one million students' federal financial aid.

"We should be expanding opportunities for college in America, not eliminating opportunities for students to seek financial aid," said Sen. Jon D. Corzine, D-N.J. in a Nov. 18 press release. "I don't know how the Bush Administration can call itself compassionate when it is throwing students out of the opportunity to seek a college education."

Easy. The spoiled rich preppy kids of the Bush Administration are passionate for war. Not compassionate to us community college peons.

Implementation of the bill would mean that the U.S. Department of Education would change its formula for determining eligibility, possibly reducing the average Pell grant by \$300.

Last year, Congress stopped the government from changing its method for determining college financial aid, but the bill introduced this year clears the way for the government to quash dreams of higher education for many low-income students.

Nearly 100,000 students may lose their funding completely, while at least an additional million others will receive less than before.

According to Brian Fitzgerald, staff director of the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance, the altered formula would have the greatest effect on middle-income families earning \$35,000 to \$40,000 per year.

With all of the current budget crises causing tuition costs to skyrocket, one has to wonder if the government has thought this out.

If you cut financial aid and tuition becomes so steep that even middle-income families can't afford it, where will all of these higher-education-deprived individuals go?

Well, enrollment numbers for the military will rise, what with the tempting benefit packages offered to those who serve.

Maybe that has been Bush's intent all along. Strip opportunity to create soldiers.

Not surprising.

This way the war-evading rich kids can stay well taken care of behind the palatial gates of their estates, while the hard-working, college-deprived students die in a war created by another man's greed.

Is this where our country is headed?

## Sacking the Football Coach Firing

■ Athletic department has some 'splainin' to do.

BY SAM HAHN  
SPORTS EDITOR

After finishing the 2004 season with a 3-7 record, Monarch football Head Coach Ron Ponciano was fired late last month ending his four-year tenure at Valley College.

So obviously, Ponciano's firing shouldn't come as a shock to his players and coaches, who suffered with the rest of us as the Monarchs amassed a 4-16 record in the past two seasons.

But, that's obviously not the case.

Valley's athletic department has yet to comment on the situation, and has not released a statement concerning the matter.

Both players and coaches were shocked and appalled upon hearing that Ponciano was relieved of his duties a week after the season ended.

Ponciano's job seemed to be in the bag as the Monarchs came off a hard-fought comeback 36-33 victory over their rival Pierce College Brahmas in the final week of the season.

Taking over the program from Carl Ferrill in 2001, Ponciano amassed a 12-28 record in four seasons at Valley.

He also has helped more than 50 of his players receive scholarships and play football at the next level, according to the 2004 Monarch football program.

After going 4-6 in his first two seasons at Valley, the Monarchs struggled greatly in the 2003 season as the team won just one game and finished the season with a 1-9 record.

Looking to turn the program around in 2004, Ponciano brought in new offensive coordinator Don Fellows and defensive coordinator Leon Criner to bolster the team.

As assistant head coach Jimmy Sims was named interim head coach, many players and coaches were unhappy. Fellows stepped down as offensive coordinator and some players said they would not return next season.

Freshman defensive back Geoff Tisdale, who was among the conference leaders in interceptions in the 2004 season, was quoted in the Los Angeles Daily News that he was unhappy with the firing of Ponciano and was looking to transfer.

People looking at the situation can compare Ponciano's firing to what happened to Notre Dame football coach Tyrone Willingham, who was fired after three seasons.

Willingham compiled a 21-15 record in three seasons at South Bend. He struggled his final two seasons by finishing the 2003 season with a 5-6 record, and a 6-5 record in 2004.

Most college football coaches get a five-year time frame to work out the kinks in their programs and produce a successful program. Ponciano was given four years and was only given a year with new offensive and defensive coordinators. That wasn't enough time.

Ponciano deserved more time based on the number of students he helped move on to the next level and brought a quality to the team that was more than just a football coach.

"Coach Ponciano was a mentor and I wish him the best," said freshman quarterback Brendon Doyle. "He gave me a lot of confidence and he was a father figure to a lot of the players, including myself."

## Ask Not For Whom the Bells Jingle ...

■ Christmas commercialism adds its sparkle of silver and gold to the joyous holiday season.

BY TIFFANY FARMAKIS  
NEWS EDITOR

Christmas is a season of human ingenuity, enjoyment of life and capitalist productivity.

Each Christmas the same columns and editorials are published articulating a general disapproval of the commercialization of this "holy season." But I like the commercialization and to those of you who refuse to accept the natural evolution of this holiday I say: Get over it.

The spirit of giving and receiving that comes with Christmas is wonderful and by no means should it stop. If a few entrepreneurs want to take advantage of this, then so be it.

From childhood, most were raised to believe that the true meaning of Christmas centers on assorted nativity tales (although Jesus wasn't even born in December) and charitable actions (love thy neighbor). However, Christmas as we celebrate it today is a 19th-century American innovation.

Christmas became a federal holiday in 1870 and then developed into the leading American outlet for celebrating the goods and pleasures of life.

This view was popularized in works such as

Clement Clarke Moore's poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas" (1823) and Charles Dickens's story "A Christmas Carol" (1843).

The giving of gifts became a major feature of Christmas. Early Christians denounced gift-giving as a Roman practice and Puritans called it diabolical.

I call it an ingenious idea. Reward those who have fulfilled some meaning in your life. What is so diabolical about that?

Nothing.

What most people are upset over was how this seemingly selfless idea became corrupt. Human beings are inherently greedy and for those who saw this flaw and exploited it: good for you.

American capitalism fueled gift-giving. With people wanting to reach out and express their joy to family and friends and large companies making gifts available cheaply, it was only a matter of time

before commercialism would triumph.

Some may look down on this, especially the Puritans who are skeptical about everything. Remember, these are the same people who proclaimed Santa Claus to be the anti-Christ.

Granted, Santa isn't a symbol for Christian mercy or unconditional love. On the contrary, he is for justice, giving only to good children and leaving coal for the bad ones.

Unfortunately, many still argue that the spiritual meaning of Christmas is religion and self-sacrifice. Wrong. Christmas celebrates and glorifies the American ideals of justice, selfishness and capitalism.

It is time to take the Christ out of Christmas, and allow the holiday to evolve into the guilt-free egotistic, commercial celebration that it rightfully should be.

It's the American way.



ILLUSTRATION BY TIFFANY FARMAKIS / VALLEY STAR

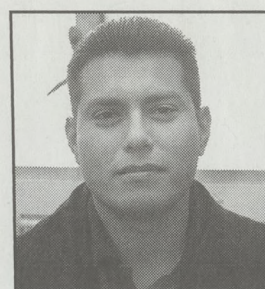
## CampusView

PHOTOS BY DAN VILLASENOR



"Happiness and family."

-Maria Low



"A certain joy. A family bonding."

-Robert Barcenas



"The day when family gets together."

- Erzy Perez



"Celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ."

- Deborah Rossello

## What does Christmas mean to you?

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Custodial Kudos

Thank you for your article about Valley College's hard-working employee, Markia Angelica Arzela. The people who take care of our buildings, trim our lawns, prepare and serve our food usually go unappreciated. Most of the time, we don't even acknowledge their existence. Wouldn't it be nice if students and faculty would remember to smile and say hello the next time they pass a custodian, gardener or other workers who keep this lovely college looking its best.

Mark Alexander  
Valley Star reader

#### Cash Cow Kickback

It was with some interest that I read Susan Maltby's opinion column regarding the "cash cow" that parking fines are creating. We have begun a search for that cow and will let her know when we find it.

So why do we write tickets? Tickets control parking access, allowing space for students and staff to park. Ms. Maltby complained about "overcrowded parking lots." If we didn't control access then anyone could park on campus at anytime, thus taking spaces from students.

Ticket income is a miniscule part of the revenues of the college, totaling about .0014 percent of the college budget. The fact is that the parking ticket income is very small in comparison to the total

budget. The college does not realize anywhere near the \$200,000 in revenue Ms. Maltby's generous calculations predict.

In the 2003-2004 year, income from citations was approximately \$54,000 and revenue for this year is predicted to be about the same. While the fine for a parking ticket is \$30, the college receives about \$18 of the payment with the balance going to the courts and administrative fees. In addition to that, many tickets are not paid and a few are administratively canceled, resulting in even less revenue.

As to Ms. Maltby's implication that \$200,000 was a lot of money to maintain the parking lots, some specific information may help her understand the myriad of issues facing parking operations. Expenditure for parking lot maintenance in 2003-2004 was approximately \$418,000; estimated expenditures for this year are approximately the same. This cost reflects only maintenance (and not surface replacement) which includes all parking surface maintenance, planter areas, gardening, irrigation, utilities expense, custodial services, college Sheriff and supplies for those operations. The difference in the citation income and the cost of parking lot operations is made up by fees charged for parking passes.

The parking lots comprise about 33 percent of the 105 campus acres and service about

7,000-8,000 cars each 24-hour period. If we were to replace the parking lot surfaces (which will be partially accomplished under the bond renovation projects) the cost would be more than \$8.5 million. The remaining revenue from parking passes and citations is marked to accomplish this construction when sufficient funds are accumulated.

A final note: The cost of a parking pass at Valley has remained the same since spring of 1990 and at \$20 per semester is a deal compared to most four year college and university parking fees.

Tom Jacobsmeier  
VicePresident,  
Administrative Services

#### Student Drivers

The last thing on the minds of students is the potential to die or become maimed while on campus. However, there is a hidden danger that threatens nearly every person who steps foot in Valley College.

Tens of thousands of students traverse campus roads and parking lots every day, often unaware that they may be jeopardizing their lives. Younger drivers tend to be the most reckless, often violating traffic laws and demonstrating a lack of common sense.

Twenty-somethings driving in excess of forty miles per hour in these areas have tried to involuntarily kill or injure my colleagues

and me, and it is only a matter of time until bloodstains and police lines become omnipresent.

I propose two solutions to this problem. First, I call on the president of Valley to relocate some police officers to the task of actively seeking and punishing those who violate the speed limits. And the second, passive approach to the problem involves the construction of speed bumps in strategic locations to keep speeders at bay.

The sad truth is that this letter will fall on deaf ears until someone is seriously injured or killed. It is the duty of the administration to protect us and to promote a safe campus, but until these changes are made, Valley will remain a hazardous college.

Henry Gaboyan  
Valley Student

#### Suicide Assistance

I wish more people, especially politicians, would believe the same way as writer Katharine Anderson does as she indicates in her article, "Assisted Suicide: Whose Choice is it Anyway?" Perhaps the Bush Administration has never witnessed anyone who has suffered terrible pain. Either that, or they just don't care. To think that Dr. Kevorkian has to spend his life in prison because he assisted those who were suffering.

Harriet Steinberg  
Valley student



## WEDNESDAY TO TUESDAY

Wednesday, Dec. 8

**LAVC Jazz Ensemble**  
Directed by Woody James  
11:30 a.m.  
Music Room 112

**Muse**  
8 p.m.  
The Wiltern, Los Angeles  
\$25

**Blade: Trinity**  
Film Release  
Wesley Snipes, Kris Kristofferson  
Dir. David S Goyer  
New Line Cinema

Thursday, Dec. 9

**Performance Workshop Concert**  
11:20 a.m.  
Music Room 112

**Broadway Showcase**  
3 p.m.  
Music Recital Hall

**Muse**  
8 p.m.  
The Wiltern, Los Angeles  
\$25

Friday, Dec. 10

**Tom Jones**  
7 p.m.  
House of Blues, Hollywood  
\$60

**Dicken's "A Christmas Carol"**  
adapted by Pete Parkin  
8 p.m.  
Horseshoe Theatre  
General Admission \$15; Students/  
Seniors \$12; Faculty/Staff 2 for 1

**The Hives**  
8 p.m.  
The Wiltern, Los Angeles  
\$20

**Ocean's Twelve**  
Film Release  
George Clooney, Brad Pitt  
Dir. Steven Soderbergh  
Warner Bros.

**The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou**  
Film Release  
Bill Murray, Owen Wilson, Cate  
Blanchett  
Dir. Wes Anderson  
Touchstone Pictures

Saturday, Dec. 11

**KROQ Almost Acoustic Christmas**  
4 p.m.  
Universal Amphitheatre, Universal  
City  
\$64

**Aquabats**  
7 p.m.  
El Rey Theatre, Los Angeles  
\$15

**Dicken's "A Christmas Carol"**  
adapted by Pete Parkin  
8 p.m.  
Horseshoe Theatre  
General Admission \$15; Students/  
Seniors \$12; Faculty/Staff 2 for 1

**Valley Symphony Orchestra**  
8 p.m.  
Mainstage Theatre

**Apex Theory**  
8 p.m.  
Roxy Theatre, Hollywood  
\$10

Sunday, Dec. 12

**KROQ Almost Acoustic Christmas**  
4 p.m.  
Universal Amphitheatre, Universal  
City  
\$64

**Dicken's "A Christmas Carol"**  
adapted by Pete Parkin  
7:30 p.m.  
Horseshoe Theatre  
General Admission \$15; Students/  
Seniors \$12; Faculty/Staff 2 for 1

Monday, Dec. 13

**National Lampoons' Metal Skool**  
9 pm  
The Roxy, Hollywood  
\$12.50

Tuesday, Dec. 14

**Vandals**  
7 p.m.  
House of Blues, Hollywood  
\$15-\$17.50

**2Pac**  
Album Realease  
"Loyal to the Game"  
Interscope

## CAMPUS CONCERT

# 'Tis the Season



**HOLIDAY SPIRIT** - Valley College chamber singers performed "Something Latin" Sunday night at Monarch Hall.

## RESTAURANT REVIEW

# Desperately Seeking Christmas Dinner

Those who ditch tradition have many options.

### RESTAURANT RATINGS IN BRIEF

Pic-nics rated from \$\$\$\$ (\$30 + for the meal) to \$ (80 or less)  
Food and service are rated from \*\*\*\* (outstanding) to \* (fills the stomach).

**The Odyssey Restaurant**  
\$\$\$\$\$  
(818) 966-6144  
15600 Odyssey Drive, Granada Hills  
Off Rinaldi near the 405 Freeway

**Art's Deli**  
\$\$  
(818) 762-1221  
12224 Ventura Blvd., Studio City  
Dec. 25 hours: 7:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.

**Benihana of Tokyo**  
\$\$\$  
(818) 788-7121

**Market City Caffe**  
\$\$\$  
Burbank AMC 16 plaza corner  
(818) 840-7038

**The Rusty Pelican**  
\$\$\$ and \$\$\$\$  
(818) 242-9191  
300 Harvey Dr., Glendale

BY KATHY ARELLANO  
COPY EDITOR

Whether you and your special ones want to indulge in a decadent all-day-and-eat-all-you-want buffet at the romantic hilltop Odyssey restaurant or if you're in the mood for a steaming bowl of chicken soup at Art's Deli, you have many choices on Christmas day.

"The main reason [we're open] is that Christmas is a day for visiting, meeting," said Art's Deli owner and Valley College alumnus Art Ginsburg. "You know, if you go [visiting] in the morning, you're going to want to stop and eat breakfast."

If you crave tamales and enchiladas, most Acapulco and El Torito restaurants are open for your dining pleasure. For great Italian fare, try Market City Caffe in the heart of Burbank. Reservations for parties of eight or more are highly recommended.

TGI Friday's will serve up those low- and not-so-low-carb signature meals at most of their stores on Christmas, but call first to check store hours.

For delicious seafood, pasta and steak call ahead for a reservation at Glendale's Rusty Pelican restaurant. You can continue to celebrate the holiday at their fully stocked bar until holiday closing time at 7:30 p.m.

Or, if you want to see your food prepared up-close and personal, make a reservation now at Benihana of Tokyo where the chefs perform their Pan Asian culinary artistry with surgical perfection, right at your table.

The restaurant managers at the Odyssey, Benihana and the Rusty Pelican suggested at least a 10-day advance call for reservations.

While many people anticipate a nice holiday dinner out, many others have been scheduled to work that day and some are less than happy about it. Rusty Pelican server Kevin Schuman expressed frustration about the noon-to-7 p.m. shift fragmenting his Christmas day with his family. Server Stefan Costea is going home to Michigan to visit family but "may not have a job when [he] returns."

"Hell no, I'm not working Christmas day," server Glenn Peisner said. "It's my birthday."

If you're just looking for a quick breakfast before going to Granny's, grab a short stack and a couple strips of bacon at your local International House of Pancakes or Denny's restaurants.

Carl's Jr., Jack in the Box and Mickey D's will be flipping burgers as usual. If it's popcorn chicken you want, most KFC's are open, but call first to check the hours of operation.

Universal CityWalk is, without a doubt, the winner of "Most Restaurants In One Location That Are Open Christmas Day" award. Hungry revelers can sample foods from around the world and enjoy traditional American dishes at any one of the dozen sit-down restaurants and even go to a movie afterwards.

"Our regular menu has what people want to eat on Christmas," said CityWalk Gladstone's Unit Manager John Sowers. "They want something special and non-traditional like crab or lobster."

## Valley Welcomes Scrooge

Valley's rendition of "A Christmas Carol" delights audiences.

BY CLAUDIA LOZANO  
STAFF WRITER

"A Christmas Carol," the classic Charles Dickens tale, proves to be a timeless masterpiece even when the setting is skid row instead of England.

A Shoreditch production brings to Valley College another wonderful, cleverly crafted show through a story we all know too well but with a twist.

The setting is a universal place, "skid row" where a group of social outcasts come across a copy of A Christmas Carol and decide not only to read the book but also enact it.

Jim Beaver, who currently plays "Ellsworth" on the HBO series Deadwood, portrays Ebenezer Scrooge and visits the old classic for the second time since 1977 when he played the "Ghost of Christmas yet to come" in the Dallas Shakespeare Festival.

Beaver, a friend of Valley's drama Director Pete Parkin, accepted the role with short notice when the actor slated to play the role dropped out; Beaver learned his role in two weeks and delivered a remarkable performance.

The mom/charwoman and narrator, played by Bernadette Birkett, is

a pleasure to hear as the omniscient voice throughout. The entire cast rendered a stellar performance.

The play invites the audience to use its imagination as the cast finds the story of "A Christmas Carol" and pretends to be characters from the book, while also imitating inanimate objects and props like doors, coat hangers and windows.

The mood was created by the lovely sounds created from the cast from the willow winds to lovely Christmas carols and sight gags abound like using stuffed animals for food.

The urban flare is evident and is such a great hook that one feels compelled to watch and anticipate the next surprise, like waiting for the next specter to arrive and visit "Scrooge."

Even with the new setting, the message resonates loud and clear: Everyone can change the "Shadows of things that will be," as said by the ghost of Christmas present, unless, "The images remain unaltered."

The play will run through Dec. 19 on Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 7:30 p.m. in the Horseshoe Theatre. It's a great show apt for the entire family; a classic revamped with something for everyone, don't miss out.

# 2004's Best in Entertainment

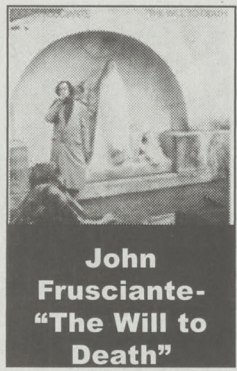
The five albums and movies of the year that proved to be above the cut.

BY WILLIAM HINES  
STAFF WRITER

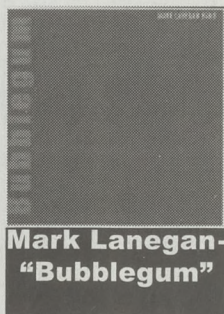
BY TIFFANY FARMAKIS  
NEWS EDITOR



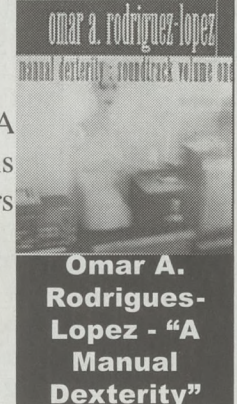
The coolest New York band since the Velvet Underground has traded in the brooding style of their debut for a perfect blend of bright noir.



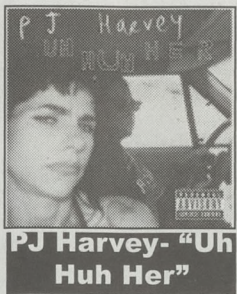
One of six albums released this year by the Red Hot Chili Peppers' guitarist, the concept makes it one of the best records of the year.



Bubblegum combines rock 'n' roll veteran, Mark Lanegan's black vocals with stark musical arrangements.

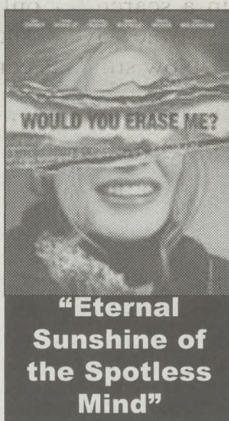


Accompanying his film "A Manual Dexterity," this side project of the Mars Volta's guitarist is mostly instrumental.



While this album sounds similar in lyrical content and mood to Polly Harvey, the obvious difference is the lack of sought after studio perfection.

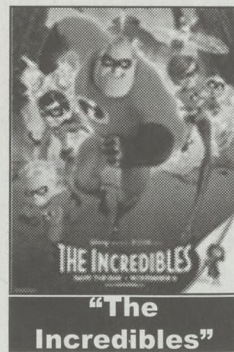
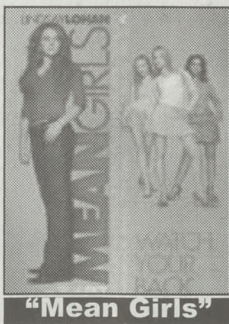
This is the kind of movie that theatres are made for. Intellectually stimulating and ultimately satisfying, this small gem exemplifies the strengths of its cast and well-bred creative team.



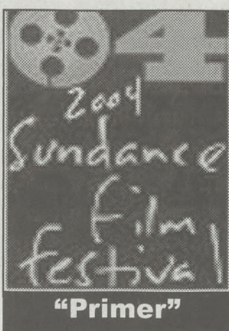
It's hard to believe that this spunky romantic comedy marks Zach Braff's directorial debut.



One of the best teen comedies in years, this movie provides an incisive, compassionate and brutally hilarious view into American high school culture.



This funny, dramatic movie proves that animation isn't just for kids. The skillfully rendered plot centers on a super-hero family.



## Fight Like a Squirrel



TIFFANY FARMAKIS/ VALLEY STAR



**'Coach'***continued from page 1*

"When the word went out that I got fired, I got couple of offers," said Ponciano. "But I got a family to think about. I don't want to move around too much. Once I moved 11 times in 12 years, but those days are gone now, my family is important to me."

In response to rumors that Ponciano has been offered a position as defensive coordinator at Citrus College, Valley Athletic Director Chuck Ferrero said, "He has a nine-hour teaching commitment to Valley in the

spring. Outside of that, he can do whatever he wants."

Of the firing, Ponciano said, "Chuck and I go way back, I am sure it wasn't easy, but he made the choice. In life we have family and friends; I felt I just lost a friend."

During his four years as head coach at Valley, 77 of Ponciano's athletes moved to the next level with scholarships, but that apparently wasn't enough to save his job. The Monarchs' 3-7 record this season, giving them a 12-28 record under Ponciano, probably sealed the coach's fate.

"I wouldn't trade the experience for anything," said Ponciano with pride. "I loved working with these kids and I will miss them more than they can ever imagine. Every week I get at least two or three calls from former players who just want to say, 'Thank you.'"

Several members of the current team have said they will not return to Valley next season because of the firing.

Nevertheless, Ferrero said, "The future of the program is full-steam ahead. I'm very confident of the future and it's going extremely well right now."

Assistant coach Jimmy Sims will take over the head coaching reins next semester.

Ponciano's 21 years of coaching experience includes serving as defensive coordinator at numerous colleges and universities before an ill-fated stint as head coach at Cal State University Northridge. At CSUN, Ponciano led his squad to a second-place finish in its conference, but was let go in 1999 after an inquiry revealed "serious and substantial" violations of both NCAA and campus rules in regards to the football team, according to a press release.

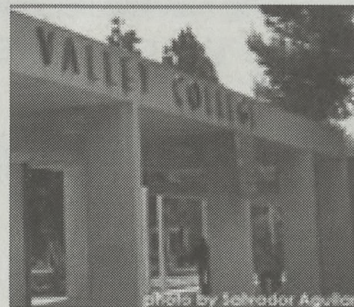


photo by Salvador Aguilar

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e-mail @

goldmaa@lavc.edu

**'Math'***continued from page 1*

grant from the Nursing Recruitment Office. Students receive tutoring and resources to help better prepare them for the registered nurse licensure exam also known as the NCLEX-RN.

"Through student testing, we identify areas

of weakness and can offer tutoring to help," said DuFour. "We offer help from ways to improve basic note taking skills to more in-depth, subject-specific help with nursing math and pediatric or psychiatric nursing help."

Nursing professor

and tutor program faculty member Samson Yigezu is dedicated to helping students get a firm grasp of math.

"In nursing, math is important to calculate medications and dosages," said Yigezu. "An error could cost someone's life."

The math lab and the nursing math tutoring

program are designed to help students like nursing major Marino Esquivel, 41, make the grade.

"This program definitely helps me," said Esquivel as she worked on homework assignments in the tutoring lab. "The hours are great. They have tutoring classes six days a week, including Saturdays."

**'Malls'***continued from page 2*

to odd novelties – and it may be home to the perfect gift for a loved one. But be vigilant about shipping costs – sometimes it can cost more to ship the item than the item is worth.

Before committing to an online purchase, make sure the website is secure. The padlock icon on the lower right part of the computer screen tells that credit card information is safe. And always run a search for online coupons. Many merchants offer deals for first-time buyers, such as \$10 off your purchase or free shipping.

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California State University  
**Northridge**



## SPORTS

## WESTERN STATE CONFERENCE — MEN'S BASKETBALL

## LAVC SCORES

**M. Basketball @ Allan Hancock**  
**12/04/04 (L 89-85)**  
 Marcus Rasberry: 14 points, 7 rebounds  
 Dante Childress: 23 points, 4 rebounds  
 Rai Colson: 14 points, 2 assists  
 M. Basketball record: 1-5

**W. Basketball @ Sequoias Fall Classic**  
 Valley vs. Sequoias (Loss)  
 W. Basketball record: 6-2

## LAVC SCHEDULE

**Wednesday 12/08/04**  
 M. Basketball @ Riverside Holiday Tourn.

**Thursday 12/09/04**  
 M. Basketball @ Moorpark Classic TBA

**Friday 12/10/04**  
 M. Basketball @ Riverside Holiday Tourn.  
 W. Basketball @ Moorpark Classic TBA

**Saturday 12/11/04**  
 M. Basketball @ Riverside Holiday Tourn.  
 W. Basketball @ Moorpark Classic TBA

**Sunday 12/12/04**  
 M. Basketball @ Condor Classic TBA  
 W. Basketball @ Moorpark Classic TBA

**Monday 12/13/04**  
 No Scheduled Games

**Tuesday 12/14/04**  
 M. Basketball vs L.A. Harbor 7 p.m.

**Wednesday 12/15/04**  
 No Scheduled Games

**Thursday 12/16/04**  
 M. Basketball @ Crown City Classic TBA  
 W. Basketball @ AVC Tournament TBA

**Friday 12/17/04**  
 M. Basketball @ Crown City Classic TBA  
 W. Basketball @ AVC Tournament TBA

**Saturday 12/18/04**  
 M. Basketball @ Crown City Classic TBA  
 W. Basketball @ AVC Tournament TBA

**Sunday 12/19/04**  
 No Scheduled Games

**Monday 12/20/04**  
 No Scheduled Games

**Tuesday 12/21/04**  
 W. Basketball vs L.A. City College 7 p.m.

**Wednesday 12/22/04**  
 No Scheduled Games

**Thursday 12/23/04**  
 No Scheduled Games

**Friday 12/24/04**  
 No Scheduled Games

**Saturday 12/25/04**  
 No Scheduled Games

**Sunday 12/26/04**  
 No Scheduled Games

**Monday 12/27/04**  
 M. Basketball @ Desert Holiday Classic

**Tuesday 12/28/04**  
 M. Basketball @ Desert Holiday Classic

**Pro Scores**

**NFL Week 12**

**(11/05-06/2004)**

**Tennessee @ Indianapolis**

**(54-21 IND)**

TEN - B.Volek:(21-35 passing, 289 yards)

TEN - D.Bennett:(3 catches, 124 yards)

IND - P.Manning:(25-33 passing, 435 yards)

IND - B.Stokley:(8 catches, 153 yards)

**New England @ Cleveland**

**(42-15 NE)**

NE - T.Brady:(11-20 passing, 157 yards)

NE - C.Dillon:(18 carries, 100 yards)

CLE - L.McCown:(20-34 passing, 277 yards)

CLE - A.Bryant:(7 catches, 115 yards)

**Arizona @ Detroit**

**(26-12 DET)**

ARI - J.Navarre:(18-40 passing, 168 yards)

ARI - L.Croom:(18 carries, 49 yards)

DET - J.Harrington:(15-27 passing, 196 yards)

DET - K.Jones:(26 carries, 196 yards)

**Minnesota @ Chicago**

**(24-14 CHI)**

MIN - D.Culpepper:(23-33 passing, 279 yards)

MIN - M.Robinson:(6 catches, 90 yards)

CHI - C.Hutchinson:(18-30 passing, 279 yards)

CHI - D.Clark:(6 catches, 58 yards)

**Atlanta @ Tampa Bay**

**(27-0 TB)**

ATL - M.Vick:(13-27 passing, 115 yards)

ATL - M.Vick:(8 carries, 81 yards)

TB - B.Griese:(13-21 passing, 121 yards)

TB - M.Pitman:(17 carries, 68 yards)

## NOTES

## NBA

The NBA is reviewing comments

Timberwolves swingman Latrell

Spewell allegedly made to a

heckler during Minnesota's

overtime victory Saturday over

the Los Angeles Clippers. The

comment was picked up by

courtside microphones for Los

Angeles's KTLA and Minnesota's

KSTC television stations.

## MLB

New York Yankees' first baseman

Jason Giaml testified to the Grand

Jury back in 2003 and admitted

taking steroids that he had

received during the 2003 season.

## NFL

Cleveland Browns' head coach

Butch Davis has resigned from

the team citing health consider-

ations, as Davis explained that

he suffered a panic attack before

the Browns game against the

Cincinnati Bengals.

## Monarchs Lose; Drop to 1-5

■ Valley loses in overtime 89-85 as team struggles to put game away. Countless turnovers and missed shots cost Monarchs win.

BY SAM HAHN  
 SPORTS EDITOR

SANTA MARIA — After falling in overtime, 89-85, to the Allan Hancock Bulldogs Saturday night, Valley saw its record to fall to a dismal 1-5.

The Monarchs dropped its fourth-straight game despite Dante Childress' 21-point effort in the second and overtime periods.

"The team struggled with the little things tonight," said freshman guard Orlando Cooper, who scored 8 points, collected 2 rebounds and had 1 steal and 1 assist. "We missed lay ups and free-throws, and turnovers really hurt us tonight. But Dante come up big for us today."

Valley built a five-point lead with 14:41 remaining in the second half, but the game stayed close after Mike Martin was called for a technical foul. Martin used both hand to push Bulldog forward Stewart Kussler away from him while going for a rebound.

"There were a lot of bad calls make tonight," said Martin, who scored 4 points and grabbed 3 rebounds, but struggled during the game. "[The referees] wouldn't let me play and took me out of the game early on with some questionable calls."

The Bulldogs tied the game at 77 with 13 seconds remaining in regulation. Valley missed the opportunity to win the game after Marcus Rasberry's baseline floater missed at the buzzer. The game stayed close during much of the overtime period, but the Bulldogs outscored the Monarchs 12 to 8 in overtime.

"Even with the loss, many of our freshman really stepped up today," said Head Coach Glen Hefferman. "We need to work on some things, and while some players stepped it up, I'd like to see some other players come up big for us in the future."

The Monarchs call themselves a second-half team, Saturday was no exception. Valley fell behind early and played catch up during the first half. Valley's only lead of the first half came on Rasberry's first basket of the game to give the Monarchs a 2-0 lead. Rasberry finished with 17 points, 7 rebounds, 4 steals and 4 assists. Childress finished with 23 points and lead the Monarchs in scoring.

The Monarchs played better in the second half and tied the game at 41 early in the second period. The team played well enough to win the game, but failed to close out the game.

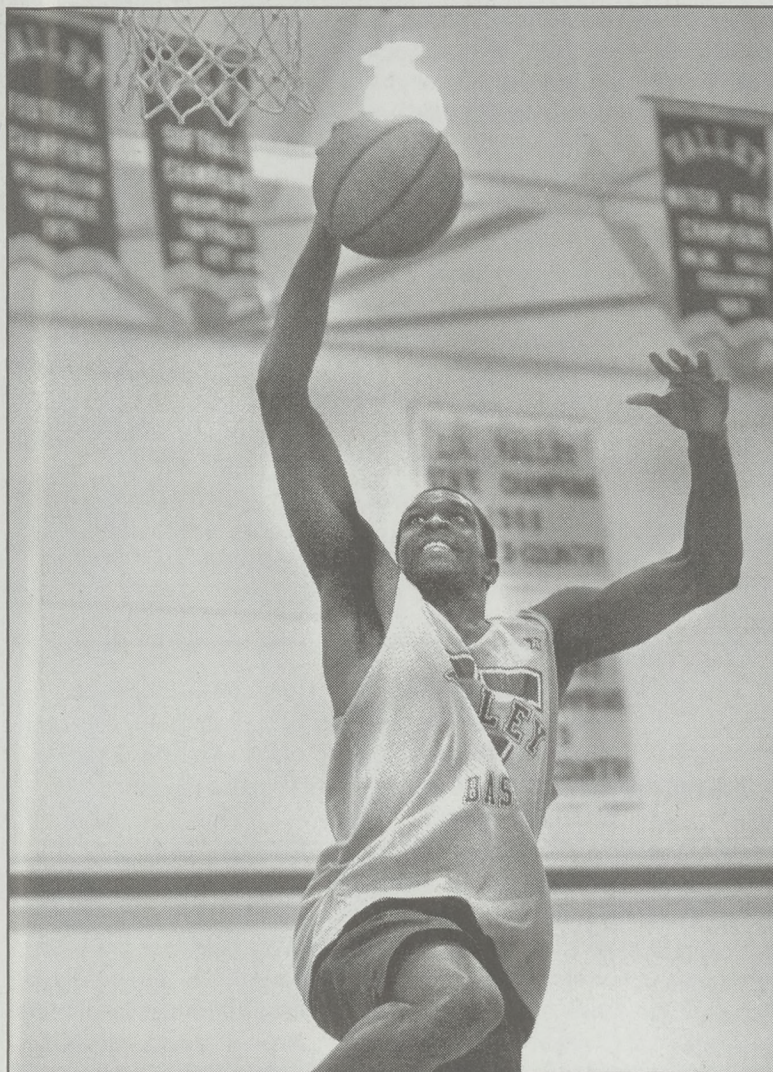
"We broke down mentally," said Cooper. "We started off slow, and we played catch-up the entire game."

Cooper added that Valley failed to make the big plays needed to win the game.

"I agree with what [Cooper] said earlier," added Martin. "We have to get right mentally. I know it's early in the season, but I'm not happy with our 1-5 record right now."

Hefferman said he was unhappy with the some of the calls, but said he's not going to blame the referees for the loss.

"I can complain as a coach all I want," said Hefferman. "But, the refs didn't miss free-throws, lay ups, nor did they give up any



GREG BURMANN / VALLEY STAR

**ON THE FLY** - Valley forward Jordan Rush goes up for the dunk during practice in the north gym.

turnovers."

The coach remains optimistic about the seasons and said his team is learning.

"I can't focus on how many wins and losses the team has right now," said Hefferman of the slow start.

"Since most of our players on the team are freshmen, all I can ask for from this team is to improve and strive to be better down the line."

The Monarchs are playing

in the Riverside Classic from December 7-11. The team will play its first home game Dec. 14 against L.A. Harbor College at 7 p.m.

## WSC BASKETBALL

**MEN: DEC. 14 @ 7 P.M.**  
 vs. Los Angeles Harbor College

**WOMEN: DEC. 21 @ 7 P.M.**  
 vs. Los Angeles City College

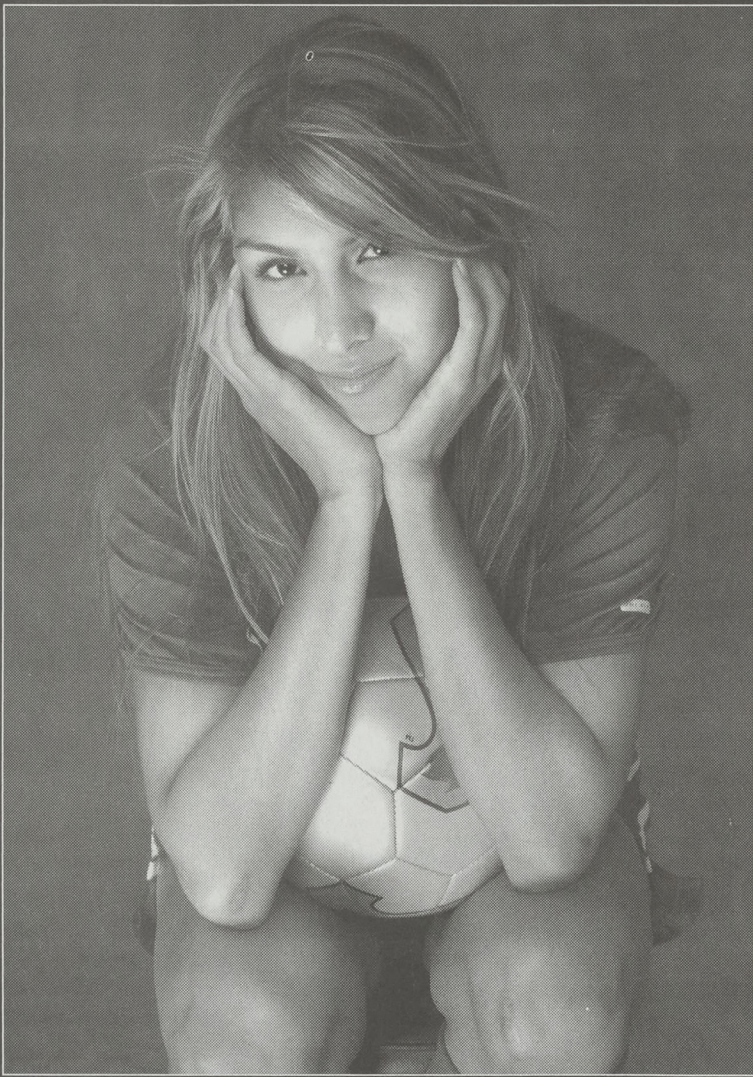
## Sweeping With Style

■ Lilibeth Castañeda designed the Monarch defensive system.

BY JORGE GALLEGOS  
 PHOTO EDITOR

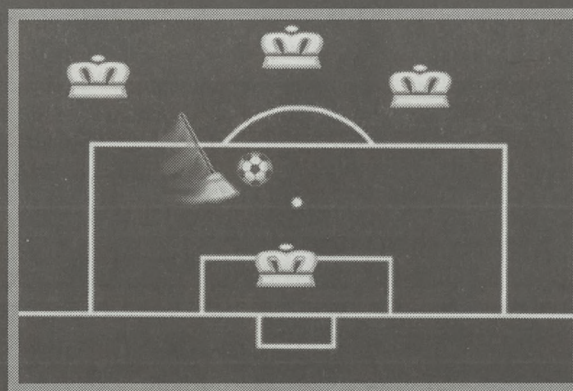
Lilibeth Castañeda looks at the Lady Monarchs' soccer uniform and is unimpressed. She thinks that a more feminine design would not only look better, but also be more comfortable and therefore help the Monarchs play better. And she should know; the 19-year-old aspiring fashion designer is also one of Valley's best players.

As a single mother of a 3-year-old boy and with a face that could be on the cover of a fashion magazine, the talented sweeper is already working on a new design. "Women are women," said Castañeda. "I'd like to be distinguished as one."



JORGE GALLEGOS / VALLEY STAR

**LADY 'D'** - Lilibeth Castañeda was a key player in the Monarch defensive system in the 2004 women's soccer season.



BOB TEICHMANN / VALLEY STAR GRAPHIC

**SWEEPER** - The last defender that takes care of anything that passes by the defense.

But don't let her model-worthy looks fool you, Castañeda is a tough, smart defender whose 11 years of experience is invaluable to the Monarchs defensive system.

"I feel very protected when I see Lili managing the defense," Monarchs' goalkeeper Sidney Sterk said.

The 5-foot-6-inch talented Monarch is a very unique and determined player. She wears top of the line silver cleats like the ones British soccer superstar David Beckham sports. "I love playing as a sweeper," said Castañeda. "I'll do anything to save a goal."

Castañeda has been teased for her looks by her teammates more than once. Head Coach Erick Archilla has shouted at her in repeatedly. "Stop looking pretty and play," "I can't help it," said Castañeda. "Winning or losing I'm always smiling."

When Castañeda, was eight, she was inspired while watching her father play soccer at Balboa Park. Before long, she joined her first club team with her three sisters as teammates. It wasn't always easy. "We fought all the time," said Castañeda. "We brought our problems to the field and then took them back home adding others like claiming

bad passes."

Castañeda played for Mission College last year but was convinced by former Monarchs to play for Valley while playing with her in an outside league with the approval of Head Coach Erick Archilla.

"Lili is very smart and experienced," said Archilla. "She has leadership and as a sweeper I need someone who could come out playing."

Castañeda is also an equestrian enthusiast and interested in fashion design, but right now, soccer leads by a header. "I'll stick with soccer, it comes natural," she said.

The talented sweeper would like to play soccer for UCLA, but would like to the Arts Institute to develop her other passion, fashion design, and make her own line of clothes. As for equestrian sports, the high cost makes it prohibitive for now. In the meantime, Castañeda will continue designing defenses for the Lady Monarchs.

AN OPINION  
The BCS

BY MICHAEL ORDOÑA  
 SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Let's talk about the BCS (Bowl Championship Series, or Buy a Clue Somebody). This was supposed to be the system that would take the NCAA football National Championship out of the capricious hands of the coaches and writers and apply some cold, hard logic to the process.

Which is why we now have two undefeated teams shut out of the championship game. And why 10-1 Cal (No. 4 in both the AP and coaches' polls) will not appear in one of the four "major" BCS bowls, shunted instead to the Holiday Bowl against Texas Tech (No. 21 AP, No. 22 BCS). And why three-loss Pittsburgh (8-3, No. 20 AP, No. 21 BCS) does go to a major bowl, the Fiesta, against undefeated Utah (12-0, No. 5 AP, No. 6 BCS). And why undefeated Auburn gets stuck with two-loss Virginia Tech in the Sugar Bowl and no chance at the championship.

If all of these numbers make your head swim, congratulations, you're a reasonable person. Why not have No. 1 play No. 2 and No. 3 play No. 4? Good question. Why not lock out teams with, say, three losses? Good question. Why not have at least a semi-final round before the National Championship game so all three unbeaten get a crack at the title? Gooooood question.

The BCS is supposed to obviate the need for a playoff system by attaining the best of all possible worlds: a statistical average of computer rankings and coaches' and writers' polls. In this presumably improved system, Cal blew out Stanford two weeks ago and lost ground in the rankings to the team that eventually supplanted them in their desired major bowl, the Rose Bowl — even though Texas was idle. The next week, Texas won its game and Cal was idle — and Cal widened its lead over the Longhorns. And last week, Cal declined to run up the score on their opponent with Texas again idle — and Texas passed Cal in the standings.

So why not a  
playoff system?

As one Cal player said before the final standings came out, if you have to embarrass a team in order to get to a major bowl, there's something wrong with the system. Head Coach Jeff Tedford's order to sit on the ball deep in their opponents' territory may indeed have cost the Golden Bears their first Rose Bowl bid in 49 years and at least \$2 million (the difference in guaranteed payout between the Rose and Holiday bowls).

So why not a playoff system?

Schools get millions of dollars and untold benefits in recruiting and prestige from every nationally televised game. The bowl season falls over what is winter break for most colleges, so the academic impact on players appearing in a couple more games is minimal. And if the most valuable on-field experience schools can give these budding big-time athletes is to play under the spotlight glare under NFL-like conditions, adding games only makes the college season more closely resemble the extended professional schedule.

If a playoff slate were to include the top 12 teams, not only would there be no reasonable argument that the very best squads in the country didn't get a chance at the championship, but going 12 deep would leave room for Cinderella stories. Using this year's BCS rankings, that would mean last year's champion, LSU, and Big Ten darling Iowa would get a shot at the title.

In that scenario, the top four teams would get a bye while teams 5-8 hosted 9-12. The winners of the first round would then go to a quarterfinal round at four neutral sites. The two winners of that round would play the semifinals at two of the "major bowl" sites, culminating in an undisputed championship game at the last remaining major bowl.

The other 13 teams in the top 25 can do whatever they want, play in the Joe's Garage Bowl or declare themselves the winner of Miss Congeniality, but no one could argue that the top contenders didn't have a fair chance at the title. The maximum number of added games for any school (over the current system) would be two, and that would only happen if, say, Cinderella Iowa survived to meet Wicked Stepmother USC in the championship game.

Of course, the BCS (Blatantly Corrupt and Spineless) school presidents remain adamantly opposed to any kind of a playoff system. Which means we get at least five more years of anything but undisputed champions, as that's how long the BCS (Bag of Colossal Stupidity) contract lasts.



# NEWS

7


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## 'Disconnected'

*continued from page 1*

friend, Iyari.

"He starts connecting to the world through April," said Davidson. "Some people become fanatics about celebrities, though they haven't met them they can relate to them. That's what happens to Devon with April."

According to Davidson, all the characters are based on pieces of her personality.

"[Devon] is this person I turned into when I got mad," Davidson said, explaining that a week into writing the book, she experienced a tragedy in her life and the book allowed her to channel her feelings.

"Some people turn to alcohol and drugs, but I turned to some-

thing creative instead of something destructive," Davidson said.

It took Davidson a year and a half to write the book, and toward the end, she said, she couldn't finish it. "I couldn't think like him anymore, I was over all the stuff that made me angry that I put into the character."

"But I knew that if I wanted to put that part of my life behind me, I'd have to finish," said Davidson.

Since finishing *Disconnected*, Davidson started writing a second book, "Excuse Me, Sir, Have You Seen God?"

"This book is more philosophical, the first was psychological," said Davidson. "It's about a 10-year-old boy who loses his brother, his idol, his everything."

Davidson said the book asks, "How do you understand death at such a young age?" as the book follows the boy's search for God.

Davidson said writing the second book feels like it's the first, "This time, I know that I'm writing a book."

Before books, Davidson wrote screenplays – starting at age 14 – and is currently writing a sit-com. When enrolling at Valley, Davidson didn't have a distinct plan, "I knew I wanted to go into film eventually."

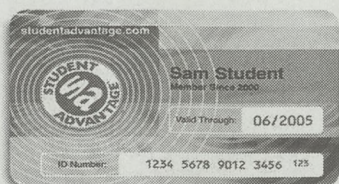
Davidson still plans to pursue film, "I plan to make movies, I don't care who I have to kill," she joked.

"My mom used to tell me watching TV would get me nowhere," she said laughing. "I'll open my own production company someday."

## FINALS SCHEDULE

	Monday, December 13	Final Exam Time
<b>Class Time:</b>	6:30 p.m./ 6:45 p.m. MW or MTWTH	6:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.
<b>Class Time:</b>	9:40 a.m. MTWTH or MW or MWF	9:30 a.m.- 11:30 a.m.
<b>Class Time:</b>	1 p.m. MTWTH or MW or MWF	12:30 p.m.- 2:30 p.m.
	Tuesday, December 14	Final Exam Time
<b>Class Time:</b>	6:30 p.m. TTH	6:30 p.m.- 8:30 p.m.
<b>Class Time:</b>	9:40 a.m. TTH or TTHF	9:30 a.m.- 11:30 a.m.
<b>Class Time:</b>	1:00 p.m. TTH or TTHF	12:30 p.m.- 2:30 p.m.
	Wednesday, December 15	Final Exam Time
<b>Class Time:</b>	8 a.m./ 8:15 a.m. MTWTH or MW or MWF	8 a.m.- 10 a.m.
<b>Class Time:</b>	11:20 a.m. MTWTH or MW or MWF	10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
<b>Class Time:</b>	2:20 p.m./ 2:40 p.m. MTWTH or MWF	1 p.m.- 3 p.m.
	Thursday, December 16	Final Exam Time
<b>Class Time:</b>	8 a.m./ 8:15a.m. TTH or TTHF	8 a.m.- 10 a.m.
<b>Class Time:</b>	11:20 a.m. TTH or TTHF	10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
<b>Class Time:</b>	1:45 p.m. TTH or TTHF	1 p.m.- 3:00 p.m.

## HOW TO GET HOME WHEN YOUR WALLET IS AS EMPTY AS YOUR FRIDGE.

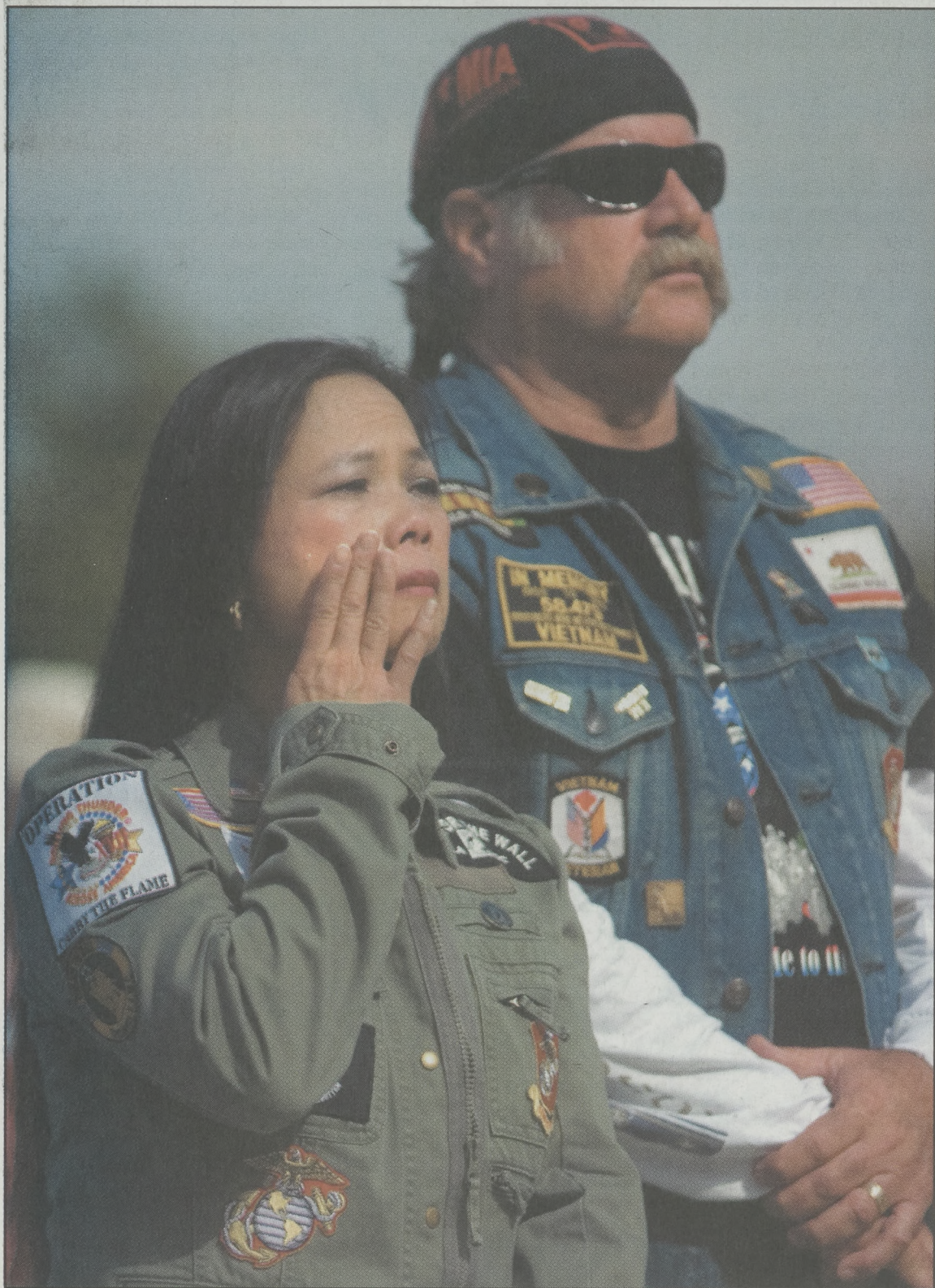


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# GALLERY



**A TEAR FOR THE LOST** - Emiko Novicki, left, wipes a tear from her eye during the playing of Amazing Grace at the 45th annual Veteran's Day Remembrance at Hollywood Forrest Lawn Cemetery Nov. 11. Her husband Mike, right, spent 22 months with the Marine Corps in Vietnam (where they met) from 1967-69, and recently retired from the Glendale Fire Department after 24 years of service.



**REMEMBRANCE** - Steven P. Knowles holds the U.S. flag during the playing of the National Anthem at the 45th annual Veteran's Day Remembrance at Hollywood Forrest Lawn Cemetery Nov. 11.

## THE BEST OF THE BEST

A Representation of  
The Valley Star's  
Finest Unseen Work.

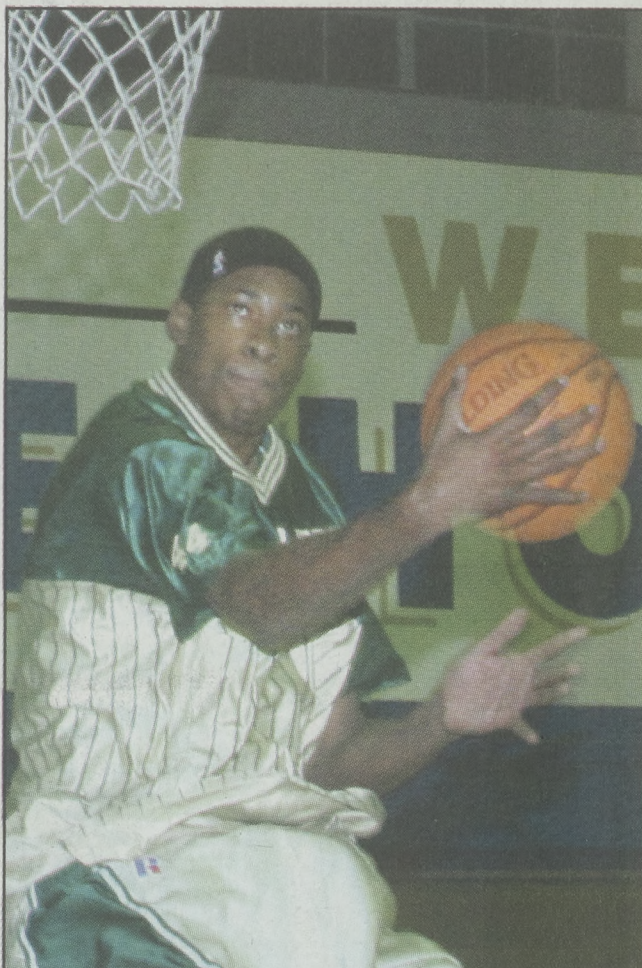
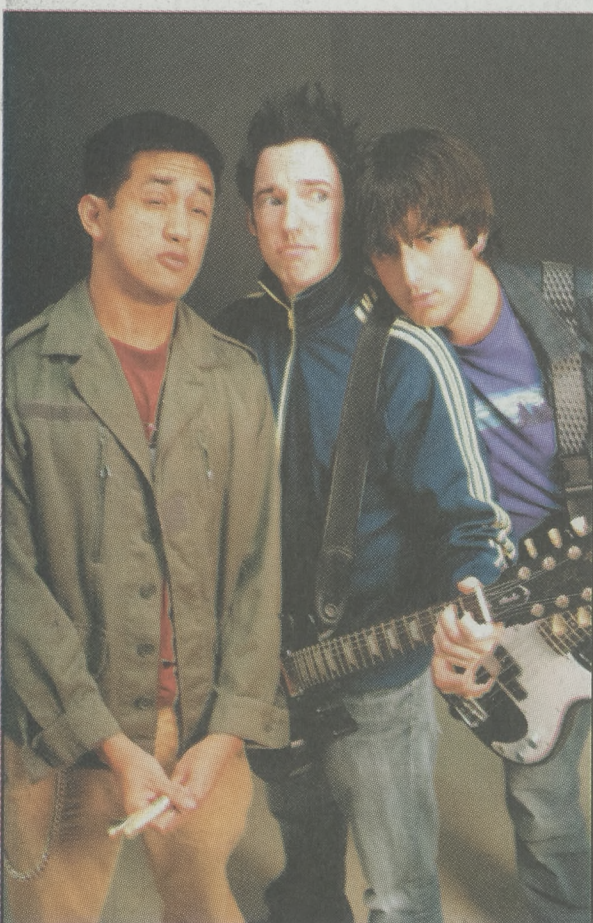
LAYOUT AND TEXT BY  
**BOB TEICHMANN**  
LAYOUT EDITOR

It is a long-standing tradition at the Valley Star for photographers to present some of their favorite photographs at the end of each semester. This term is no different.

From a Veteran's Day memorial, to a show of aggressive soccer action, our photographers have all the bases covered. If it happens in San Fernando, or even Sacramento, the photographers of the Valley Star are there.

As the photos presented herein prove, a little bit of color made waiting for the *Best Of* worth it.

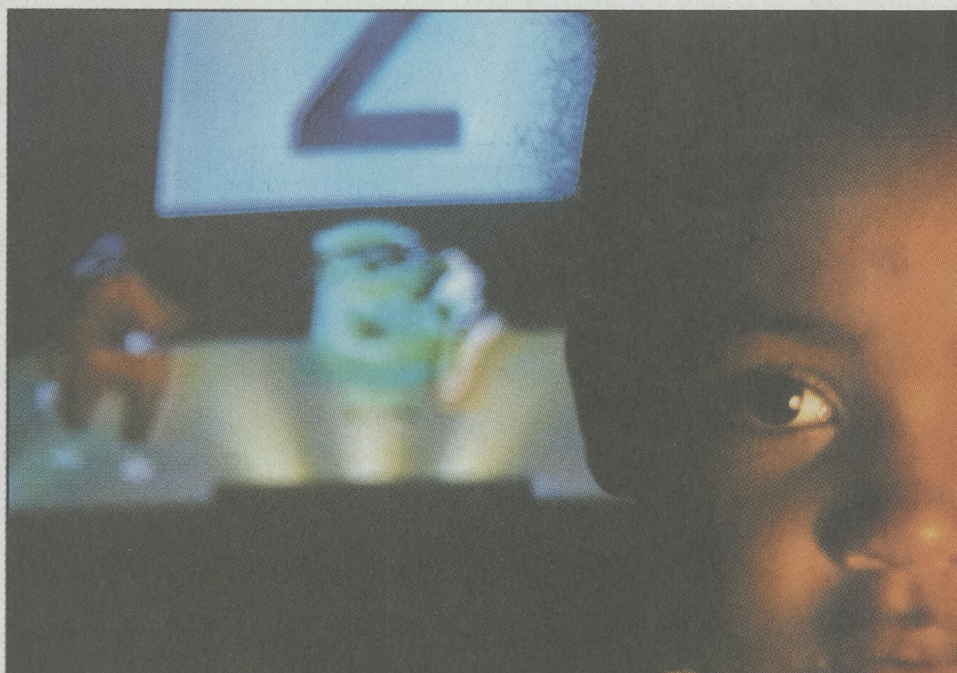
SEVAN GHAZARYAN / VALLEY STAR  
**MOVIN' ON UP** - Chicago native Mike Martin, one of the latest additions to the Monarchs, tests his skills before a game at Fullerton College Nov. 19.



DAN VILLASENOR / VALLEY STAR  
**THE DRIVING FORCE** - (L to R) Marc Precilla, Danny Smith and Scott Waldman make up the increasingly popular emo/pop/punk outfit "The City Drive."



GREG BURMANN / VALLEY STAR  
**A BRAHMA STOPPER** - Valley goalie Sydney Sterk, left, prevents Brahma mid fielder Monique Gaxiola from scoring a goal Sept. 28 at Monarch Stadium.



KHADIJAH ABDULLAH / VALLEY STAR  
**NOW I KNOW MY ABCs** - Three-year-old Dayyanah Abdullah is learning her alphabet in preparation for preschool.